

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an individual who has made a remarkable impact on higher education in this country and in my State. He has done that for more than a half a century.

William English "Brit" Kirwan retired at the end of the June as chancellor of the University System of Maryland. He served as chancellor for the past 12 years, and, during that time, he oversaw the period of growth, transformation, and achievement, which included the integration of online technology with course instruction and a 24 percent increase in enrollment.

Dr. Kirwan's lifetime of service to higher education, Mr. Speaker, began in his youth, which was spent on or around college campuses in Louisville and Lexington, Kentucky, and Durham, North Carolina.

His father, Dr. A.D. Kirwan, was an accomplished educator and college administrator as well, having written and lectured in history at the University of Kentucky and later served as dean and its president.

Brit Kirwan followed in his father's footsteps, luckily for all of us, attending the University of Kentucky, and later pursuing his master's and doctorate in mathematics from Rutgers University in New Jersey.

Dr. Kirwan came to the University of Maryland College Park in 1964, a year after I graduated. He came as an assistant professor of math. After 24 years teaching in the department, and having been elevated to the department chair, and then provost, Dr. Kirwan was selected as the president of the university in 1988.

He led the university system of Maryland's flagship campus for a decade, before leaving to become president of The Ohio State University.

I think I speak for all Marylanders when I say we were very happy when he came back to Maryland. I was a member of the Board of Regents at the time, and I remember participating in a meeting when we were searching for a new chancellor.

I asked my colleagues, "If we could get Brit to come back, what would you think?" All of them were extraordinarily enthusiastic.

So I called his house in Ohio, and his wife, Patty, answered, and I asked her if she and Brit would be interested in returning. Patty immediately replied they would both like to be closer to their grandchildren. Luckily, they were living in Maryland.

I took that as a good sign and, a short time later, Brit was back as chancellor of the university system. He managed a network that serves over 165,000 undergraduate and graduate students at 12 universities, two regional higher education centers, and one research center. It is the 12th largest university system in America. Under Dr. Kirwan's leadership, it has become a national model for excellence in higher education, research, and applied innovation.

Dr. Kirwan has been called upon by both Democratic and Republican Presidents over the years to advise on issues relating to higher education access and performance. And certainly, he has been asked by United States Senators and Members of this House for his advice and counsel as well.

He has been committed, throughout his years as an administrator, Mr. Speaker, to the principle that education ought to be accessible to all, and it ought to be seen as a tool to help people enrich their lives for learning, while advancing their careers. Among his major priorities have been making the university campuses more diverse and making attending college more affordable.

Under his leadership, the university system built partnerships with the private sector and the State and Federal Government in order to further the cause of advanced research and innovation that has practical application for economic growth and national defense.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, I was proud to be on hand to inaugurate a new test site in southern Maryland for unmanned aircraft systems, which will help in the development of new aerospace technologies and bring business development and skilled jobs to that region.

Dr. Kirwan has always understood that we need to do more to ensure that everyone who wants to pursue higher education can do so and that our colleges and universities are helping to produce skilled innovators and workers. He knew that the university system was a partner in economic growth in our State and that university and academic institutions were partners in growing the U.S. economy.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the pleasure of working closely with Dr. Kirwan for many years, and I have seen, firsthand, his passion for higher education, his respect for faculty and staff, and his love of students.

Last week, I had the opportunity to participate in a ceremony to rededicate the University of Maryland mathematics building in honor of Dr. Brit Kirwan. That building, in which he taught mathematics, is now named in his honor for him.

All of us, Mr. Speaker, have witnessed his determination to make the university system of Maryland a source of pride for our State and for our country, and he has done so.

He has been a man who is deeply devoted to his wife, Patty, a wonderful woman, and their wonderful family and their community. Patty Kirwan is, herself, an extraordinary partner in the success that she and Brit have both achieved.

Mr. Speaker, Chancellor Brit Kirwan is a man of extraordinary intellect, vision, understanding, compassion, character, and principle. He has brought all of these traits to bear in all of the important roles he performed throughout every endeavor in his life.

On behalf of all of us who live in our State but, indeed, on behalf of all the

citizens of the United States whom he has advantaged in one way or another, I thank Dr. Kirwan for his leadership on behalf of the higher education for our State and for our country.

Dr. Kirwan has stepped down as chancellor, but, Mr. Speaker, I know he will continue to lend all of his great talents to making higher education ever more effective and his country ever more successful.

Well done, Doctor.

TUBEROUS SCLEROSIS COMPLEX

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, tuberous sclerosis complex, or TSC, is a genetic disease which causes tumors to form in organs throughout the body, impacting the health and abilities of those born with it.

Nearly 50,000 Americans are affected by this condition, and many more cases remain undiagnosed because of lack of awareness or observable symptoms. For these individuals and their families, the fight against TSC is constant.

But in the face of this adversity, those with TSC show us strength and determination, not only to survive, but to thrive; individuals like Evan Moss from Virginia.

Evan was just 2 years old when he was diagnosed with TSC and, by age 4, was suffering up to 400 seizures a month because of his condition. But like so many with TSC, Evan's story is not defined by this impact. Now 11 years old, Evan is an accomplished author and a passionate advocate for those living with TSC.

As a member of the Congressional Rare Disease Caucus and honorary chair of the Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance, I am focused on shedding light on conditions like TSC and highlighting exceptional individuals like Evan.

The fight against TSC extends far beyond this Chamber, but each of us can play an important role in understanding and, ultimately, defeating tuberous sclerosis.

PASSAGE OF THE TRANSPORTATION BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. NOLAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, I would like to begin by thanking Chairman SHUSTER, chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and Ranking Member DeFAZIO, for bringing forth here to floor of the House a long-term transportation bill.

It is the product of numerous hearings that have been held over the last couple of years, and those hearings were interesting in that, universally, whether we were hearing from the head of the national Chamber of Commerce, or hearing from the head of the AFL-